

Toolkit for Community Gardens

CITY OF  Armadale





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Background

The City of Armadale recognises community gardens as an important part of any community. They can serve as engagement hubs for social interaction and promote environmental improvement, food security and a sharing economy. Well planned and managed community gardens can achieve important objectives for the community's wellbeing, health and sustainability.

This toolkit complements Council's policy COMD9 – Community Gardens and associated Management Practice, both available on the City's website [here](#). The policy and management practice demonstrate Council's support for and approach to the provision, development and management of community gardens.

The City's support of community gardens is in line with the following outcomes and strategies.

Strategic Community Plan 2016-2031

Outcome	Strategy
1.1 A strong sense of community spirit	1.1.1 Provide opportunities to connect individuals to each other and the wider community
1.2 Active community life that is safe and healthy	1.2.2 Provide opportunities to improve health outcomes for everyone

Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2014-2017

Key Action	Key Outcome
7.2.5 Support the establishment of sustainable community fresh food initiatives by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a clear position on supporting community gardens 	Community garden guidelines/policy developed

This guide should be read in conjunction with the City's Parks Facility Strategy.

Objectives of this Toolkit

- To assist groups to establish and manage community gardens by providing advice on various components including City approvals, tenancy arrangements, partnerships with other organisations, grant applications and Council's Financial Assistance Policy.
- To build capacity of groups to develop and promote themselves and partner with other relevant organisations for mutual benefit and cooperation.
- To provide information on best practice models and community engagement.
- To provide a map of sites that have been assessed on a preliminary basis by the City for suitability as a potential community garden.
- To guide groups through the application process.



What is a Community Garden?

A community garden is defined as land cultivated collectively by a community led group for the purposes of food production and recreational gardening.



What is the Role of a Community Garden Group?

Submitting a proposal

For sites owned or managed by the City, groups are required to submit a proposal to the Community Planning Department. Staff will assist groups with the preparation of their proposal which must contain the following information, at a minimum:

- The purpose of the garden and how it will benefit the local community.
- Confirmation that the group is an incorporated, not-for-profit organisation.
- The number of members of the group.
- Proposed location of the garden.
- If relevant, details of investigation into sites not on City Land or land already endorsed by Council as potentially suitable.
- An indication of the layout and dimensions of the proposed site including any proposed structures (including fencing).
- How the group proposes to access water and power.
- Management of water usage, waste and storage of equipment and materials.
- Proposed management structure.
- Strategies intended to minimise problems such as odour, vandalism, noise, site aesthetics and vermin.
- Impact on nearby residents and organisations in close proximity.
- How the group intends to fund the establishment and upkeep.
- Whether the group intends to hold events and likely participant numbers.



Completing a planning/development application

In most cases, following the submission of a proposal, a change in land use (i.e. land zoned as a recreation to a community garden) requires an application for planning approval. This must be submitted to the City's Planning Department. City staff are happy to help groups with their applications and answer any questions. The planning application information can be found on the City's website [here](#).

Incorporation

If a group would like to establish a community garden on the City's land, they will need to be incorporated in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*. The group must be run by a committee that takes legal and financial responsibility for the establishment and ongoing operation of a community garden, including public liability and site insurance.

Unincorporated groups are welcome to put an initial proposal to the City, but will be required to be incorporated in order for the proposal to progress to a formal investigation and assessment stage.

Engaging the community and making connections

The purpose of a community garden is to create and enhance community connections, improve wellbeing and physical health. Groups are encouraged to engage with their community, particularly those in close proximity to the proposed community garden, in order to garner support and build positive relationships. Groups may be asked to consult directly with surrounding residents and businesses as part of the application process.

In addition, City staff will advertise the proposed garden through signage both at the site and on the City's website seeking feedback on the proposal, for a period of 30 days. The details of feedback received by both the group and the City will form part of a final report to Council which will recommend either continuing the process or declining the proposal; in which case City staff will work with the group to review their proposal or find an alternative location.

What is the City's Role in Community Gardens?

The City will assist groups interested in establishing a community garden in a number of ways, including:

- Assisting groups to build capacity by becoming incorporated or facilitating partnerships between the group and other relevant organisations.
- Guiding groups through the City's assessment and approval process.
- Assisting with the development of a Memorandum of Understanding, or agreement, for the site.
- Potential provision of funds in accordance with the City's Financial Assistance Policy for the development and activities of the group.

City staff will guide groups through the process of approvals and offer assistance wherever possible. Groups are encouraged to contact the Community Planning Project Officer in the first instance by phone on 9394 5000 or by email at info@armadale.wa.gov.au.



Community Garden Site Selection and Process

Non City owned/managed land - schools, private or not-for-profit organisations

The City supports and encourages community development through mutually beneficial partnerships between local groups and organisations wherever possible. For this reason, it is the City's preference that community gardens are established on land owned by organisations other than the City of Armadale. An example of this is a partnership between a group and a local school; the students may benefit by becoming involved in the maintenance and activities associated with a community garden. Groups may also find that applying for a garden on City owned land can prove to be time and labour intensive.

City owned/managed land – subject to further investigation for suitability as a garden

There are some areas of land that have already been endorsed by Council as having the potential to be a community garden (i.e. there is adequate power and water, the land is not used for another purpose and there is adequate parking and toilets available), however further investigation by City staff is yet to be done.

The identification of these potential sites may have been prompted by community feedback, master planning of the site or land designated as community use in new development areas.

The sites endorsed by Council (as at 2017) are:

- Cross Park, Roleystone *
- Lot 2333 River Road, Kelmscott
- John Dunn Reserve, Kelmscott
- Alfred and William Skeet Reserves, Forrestdale.

Maps of the sites can be found at the end of this document.

City staff will still be required to do preliminary investigations and assessment before a proposal is considered for one of these sites.

It is possible that further investigation and assessment will determine that some of the sites are not suitable, for example, power and water services are inadequate. In this case City staff will work with the group to identify an alternative location.

If a site assessment satisfies the requirements of all relevant City departments, a Management Agreement or Lease will be developed and considered by Council. This agreement will formalise access to the site and confirm arrangements between the group and the City.

**The Roleystone Community Garden group is currently in the process of finalising their application for this location.*



City owned/managed land – not yet endorsed or investigated

Groups can submit a proposal for a garden to be installed on a site not already endorsed by Council (refer to page 4 - Submitting a Proposal).

Groups are encouraged to contact the City's Community Planning Project Officer to discuss an idea for a garden, or ask any questions in the first instance. The proposal will be presented to Council through a report to the Community Services Committee. Council will then determine if the proposed site is suitable; further investigation and assessment will follow, as per the process for endorsed garden sites.

Should the site be approved by Council for a garden, a Management Agreement or Lease will be developed for approval by Council. Staff will work with the group to identify mutually beneficial arrangements for the management of the site. This agreement will formalise access to the site and confirm arrangements between the group and the City.

Financial Assistance

Various grants are available for groups to apply for assistance with the set-up of community gardens, projects, equipment and operations.

Council has a Financial Assistance Policy to guide funding for groups to achieve outcomes that are consistent with the City of Armadale Strategic Community Plan. This policy can be found on the City's website here:

https://www.armadale.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/assets/documents/publications/Current_Policy_Manual.pdf

The following resources may also be helpful for grants information:

- Department of Local Government and Communities
<https://www.dlgc.wa.gov.au/GrantsFunding/Pages/Community-Gardens-Grants.aspx>
- Lotterywest – Community Spaces Outdoor
<http://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants/grant-types/community-spaces-outdoor>



Helpful Links

The following resources may be useful for groups wishing to establish a community garden:

Community Gardens WA

<http://communitygardenswa.org.au/>

This is an online hub for all things related to community gardening with an active network, downloadable resources and a database of local community gardens.

Community Garden Framework, City of Marion

<https://www.marion.sa.gov.au/community-gardens>

This is a comprehensive document compiled by the City of Marion containing valuable information for groups from setup through the design phase.

Australian City Farms & Community Gardens Network

<http://communitygarden.org.au/>

Broad network of volunteers, members and participants who share information, ideas and stories and advocate for local gardeners and the development of community gardening in Australia.



Council Endorsed Sites

These sites are subject to further investigation by City of Armadale officers to determine suitability as a community garden.

Note: Two of these sites have current applications in various stages of approval.

Cross Park, Roleystone (*under application*)



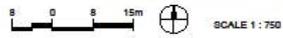


Lot 2333 River Road, Kelmscott



RIVER ROAD COMMUNITY GARDEN
RIVER ROAD, KELMSCOTT

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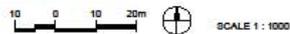


John Dunn Reserve, Kelmscott



JOHN DUNN COMMUNITY GARDEN
THIRD AVENUE, KELMSCOTT

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Forrestdale Hub, Forrestdale



FORRESTDALE COMMUNITY GARDEN
WELD STREET, FORRESTDALE

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Based on information provided by and with the permission of the
Western Australian Land Information Authority (LIDAR) data.
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